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Photo: Jeff Kardas



Congrats Justin!



Able to stomach it...

Rockstar Suzuki's Clement Desalle breaks Tony Cairoli's MXGP run with his second overall success of the year and one of his very best. '25' headed an all-Belgian podium and with victories in the premier class every season since 2009 the soon-to-be 25 year old is still undoubtedly Cairoli's best threat for MXGP glory

Photo by Ray Archer







MotoGP

Going for a ride...

Getting up close with Marc Marquez at Jerez... and it is only a few days before the champion tries to extend his perfect season to five races with the Monster Energy French GP at Le Mans. Not since Mick Doohan in 1992 has a rider claimed the opening four rounds of the championship. The Catalan continues to seek out those records

Photo by Martin Heath







AMA-MX

Monster time...

Not quite a Miller but Ryan Villopoto deserves whatever drink he fancies. Pandemonium reigns behind the reconfirmed champion at Las Vegas for the AMA SX closer and the last time we are likely to see RV on bike until the Monster Cup in October

Photo by Simon Cudby





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MX

GRAND PRIX OF SPAIN

TALAVERA DE LA REINA · MAY 11th · Rnd 7 of 17

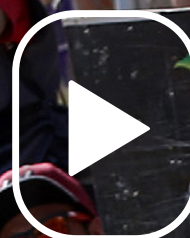
MXGP winner: Clement Desalle, Suzuki

MX2 winner: Jeffrey Herlings, KTM

THE RESPONSE

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by Ray Archer

Desalle sails across the finish line jump at Talavera after one of the most comprehensive double wins of his career. The Belgian moved up to second in the MXGP standings and less than a moto (24 points) behind Tony Cairoli



PLAY

There were several shimmering elements to the seventh Grand Prix of the year and the wonderful climate with endless blue skies and unmerciful sunshine was just one of them. There certainly was a buzz about Talavera de la Reina; a rider's circuit, a fans' circuit and a traditional hotspot for motocross (there are even permanent road signs to the venue in the town centre) on the calendar for the first time in fourteen years. The busy paddock, parking and viewing zones indicated that MXGP indeed has a loyal and sizeable following in Spain and those same spectators had waited patiently for three years for a club/circuit/organisation to bring Grand Prix back to the country.

A buoyant mood prevailed around a venue that only just squeezed in the teams and infrastructure of the FIM Motocross World Championship and two European support classes. The club, supported by the local government to bring international recognition back to Talavera, were able to instantly assess where they might need to invest to make the whole site breathe and operate a little smoother for the coming years.

The winding layout was another aspect that gave the Spanish GP a flavour as strong as the local 'jamón'. A healthy degree of criticism can be pointed at the seemingly 'independent' watering crew around the track that allegedly followed their own agenda (Talavera is a cornerstone of the Spanish national championship and thus in regular use) and in turn created a terrain that was too slick, too limiting and sometimes sketchy. The irrigation aside the setting and demands of Talavera was another step for the diversity of FIM world championship motocross. Six days previously the MX2 and MXGP riders had been in the sand of Holland. The varying traction and punishing Spanish holes was a head-spinning prospect.

The racing itself was divided. The first motos of each class were largely processional and uninteresting affairs with the order of the fields exiting the first turn largely dictating the following 35 minutes. The second races were a contrast: exciting, bustling, incident-packed, unpredictable and tense. MX2 was the pick of the programme. Red Bull KTM's Jeffrey Herlings - extending his victory streak to four events - is now on six for the year and is still unbeaten at a Grand Prix since the final round of 2012 in Germany.

After several MX3 Grands Prix Talavera were able to size-up the premier classes for the first time since 2000. Some rough edges to iron-out and also some track watering discipline needed but otherwise this was a special part of the calendar and an overdue return to Spain





MXGP SPAIN



Butron tries to hold them off in a frantic second MX2 moto

Behind the Dutchman (who was off his game on Saturday and then determinedly forceful on Sunday) Jose Butron was responsible for rousing the crowd from a lazy, heat-induced haze into a noisy vocal mass. The Spaniard had started well in Moto1 but had faded again and it seemed the sense of occasion was too much. In Moto2 however he blitzed the nerves by leading until Herlings' arrival and then battled ferociously (too much so, Husqvarna and Romain Febvre would say as the Frenchman was knocked off from second place on the last lap) with four other riders. CLS Monster Energy Kawasaki's Dylan Ferrandis and Arnaud Tonus were in the group and would eventually take podium positions while Gariboldi Honda's Tim Gajser picked up the pieces from the fall-out of that last circulation – Butron would also crash, three corners from the finish – to register a career best second spot at seventeen years of age.

Gajser was one of a select that had the track dialled by the second MX2 moto but there were some that could not get a grasp of the Spanish dirt. One of those was the MX1/MXGP world champion himself. It is a rare sight indeed to see Tony Cairoli limited by a race track and the impatient and tired figure at the end of the first moto expressed his exasperation in trying to overtake the likes of Evgeny Bobryshev and Kevin Strijbos (he didn't manage either). Sixth position meant a third Grand Prix win in a row was unlikely. The Sicilian was back to normal in the second sprint but still unable to do anything about Rockstar Suzuki's Clement Desalle.

The Belgian was imperious. His speed and laps were clicked off with such regularity, comfort and enjoyment that he singularly controlled this Grand Prix as he is prone to do at least two-three times per season. The slippery earth required a measured response and this was fertile terrain for Desalle who also excels in vaguely similar soil at Loket in the Czech Republic. Desalle's speed was still a surprise because he was a worried man on Saturday afternoon. He went backwards and looked awkward in the qualification Heat and an upset

stomach threatened to blow his weekend to the reeds. Some medication clearly worked and it is hard to remember a moment when he had to look over his shoulder throughout Sunday.

Mentions must go to the resilience again from Kevin Strijbos (podium number three and fulfilling the pre-season hype from Team Principal Sylvain Geboers), a solid performance by Steven Frossard after the Monster Energy Kawasaki Racing Team lost their talismanic figure of Gautier Paulin to collarbone and thumb breakages in Holland and also Yamaha's Jeremy Van Horebeek who is becoming a mobile statistic with his sixth straight podium finish. The Belgian is yet to drop out of the top five in fourteen motos since swinging his leg over the Rinaldi YZ450FM and the Italians' weird trend of boosting new riders' profiles when they come to their team (David Philippaerts won the 2008 title and Frossard was runner-up in 2011) continues.

Two weeks before the British Grand Prix and Wilvo Forkrent KTM's Jake Nicholls posted a career-best MXGP finish with sixth in his rookie term; a small case of good timing if ever there was one. On the subject of Brits it would be prudent for fans considering attendance of their home event to look at the GP feeder class – EMX250 – where Steven Clarke leads the standings, won in Spain and heads other standout potential in the forms of Ben Watson, Adam Sterry and James Cottrell.

After sunshine in Holland and Spain it is hard to expect a hat-trick with Matterley Basin up next. The fixture has been buried deep in the summer since 2011 and for some reason now has a riskier slot at the end of May. The weather could swing either way but the likelihood of Grand Prix throwing up yet another dramatic playing surface is strong.

Herlings gets low. The World Champion crashed twice and was a concerned man after Saturday's sessions but his fearlessness and ability again came to the fore when it counted





In 3rd place Tonus conceded another 12 points to Herlings and is going to need something special to stop the Dutchman's momentum. Maybe at the British GP next where the champion has yet to win...



Three in a row for Strijbos as Van Horebeek shows off his art...



MXGP SPAIN



PLAY

In there somewhere is Jake Nicholls eating roost on his way to sixth position in the second moto. A decent ride for the Brit ahead of his home GP and site of his last podium in 2013







Intensity from Desalle prior to the start...can the Belgian own another chequered flag at Matterley?

MXGP SPAIN





Dylan Ferrandis (above) takes his second podium of the year and also admitted he would find it hard to turn down an offer to race in the USA. Tim Gajser (top right) scores another career best in MX2 while David Philipperts (right) starts to get back up to speed on his own Yamaha with 7th overall



MXGP SPAIN





Tixier in the frame. The Frenchman's indifferent season continues and a third podium on the spin was out of reach in Spain due to a second moto fall

MIXGP SPAIN



MXGP SPAIN



Loose and unleashed. Van Horebeek is unstoppable in his second MXGP season so far



CLASSIFICATION & WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

MXGP OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Clement Desalle, BEL	Suzuki
2	Jeremy Van Horebeek, BEL	Yamaha
3	Kevin Strijbos, BEL	Suzuki
4	Tony Cairoli, ITA	KTM
5	Steven Frossard, FRA	Kawasaki

MX2 OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Jeffrey Herlings, NED	KTM
2	Dylan Ferrandis, FRA	Kawasaki
3	Arnaud Tonus, SUI	Kawasaki
4	Romain Febvre, FRA	Husqvarna
5	Jordi Tixier, FRA	KTM

MXGP WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 7 OF 17 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Tony Cairoli	304
2 Clement Desalle	280
3 Jeremy Van Horebeek	276
4 Kevin Strijbos	220
5 Gautier Paulin	205

MX2 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 7 OF 17 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Jeffrey Herlings	294
2 Arnaud Tonus	267
3 Romain Febvre	232
4 Dylan Ferrandis	225
5 Jordi Tixier	215

THE FINE EDGE...

By Adam Wheeler

And so another chance of Tony Cairoli being displaced from his MXGP perch ebbs away with process of x-ray, plaster cast and rehab appointments. Gautier Paulin's crash and injury in the Dutch Grand Prix effectively sliced off one third of the Sicilian's principal threats for 2014 with just Clement Desalle and Jeremy Van Horebeek keeping pace; the former effectively so, with his latest showing in Spain last weekend.

The Frenchman's accident was as surprising as it was disappointing because he has rarely looked out of control this season. In the first moto at Valkenswaard, in particular, he was riding so smoothly and efficiently in pursuit of Cairoli; it was almost as if he was storing some energy and rush for a second moto attack. Paulin's broken collarbone and thumb (bizarrely Kawasaki chose not to inform us when he might be coming back) is a timely reminder that the '14 MXGP championship (the first ever don't forget) is far from over and Cairoli himself is only a kicker away from similar misfortune.

Or maybe not.

In the three years we've been running OTOR I've eulogised several times on the Sicilian's remarkable skills in practically every area of his profession. If Cairoli has a weakness somewhere then it is almost impossible to fathom. Even in Spain, where he was clearly uncomfortable with the track, he caught and shadowed Desalle, who was on another level of operation that day.

Standing trackside in the sun of Valkenswaard I could not help but watch in awe again as he threw that 350 around the sandy berms in full knowledge that his front wheel spokes were on the verge of pinging away. I could see the Red Bull KTM team in the pitlane going bananas at the fact that Tony was still on full throttle despite signalling on the third lap that his wheel was misbehaving.

“In Holland I watched in awe; Cairoli on full throttle with his wheel about to disintegrate...”

Claudio De Carli was lent over the pit wall urging his rider to exercise calm. Cairoli just spun up, jumped carefully, popped the bike on the back wheel wherever he could and nursed the KTM around at a pace still faster than the rest.

When the spokes started to chink free he was forced to slow but he had already amazed; and I've seen every one of his Grands Prix since that first season of infrequent qualification in 2003. “Maybe it was crazy, but then you have to be a bit crazy if you want to win,” were his comments of explanation afterwards. It was heroic stuff to finally finish third in such circumstances. It also shone a quality that Cairoli perhaps shares with his countryman in MotoGP.



Valentino Rossi is 34 years young (Cairoli is 28) but they both have such an enthusiasm for racing and the whole Grand Prix scene. They seem to suck every piece of joy and satisfaction they can from it and I cannot help but feel that it must be a key ingredient to longevity at the top. After the front wheel drama Cairoli did not pit, retire, bang his fists on the bike or shout at the team. He wandered into the Red Bull hospitality, filled a bowl full of watermelon, chatted to some guests and then got changed to wipe the floor with his MXGP peers in the second moto.

Gautier Paulin's injury and unknown absence (the team say his return is dependent on the thumb rather than the collarbone) is a blow in terms of eeking out tension across the seventeen round championship (the ex-Ukraine fixture finally axed from the schedule altogether) but if Cairoli can remind us of his exceptional ability in cases like these and after seven titles accrued already then MXGP will be none the poorer.

As a side note I have to say how encouraging it was to see the Spanish public embrace MXGP after a three season hiatus at Talavera last weekend. The combination of scheduling (April was an unpredictable month for rain) and dark memories of the horrendous washout in 2008 meant that Bellpuig in Catalunya was a well-supported and organised race with dwindling crowds. La Banya in 2011 – despite the best efforts of the club – was an inappropriate dump of a circuit (quite literally a refuse tip was located next door). So Talavera represented either a re-birth or last throw of the dice for MX with

some of Jose Butron's misfiring influence having a bearing on spectators' curiosity and hopes. It turned out to be a resurrection, and to hear talk of local political figures pledging more support and over a longer period of time for the meeting was the kind of positive upturn you like to see in an age where sporting events are outstripped in possible financial gain by promotional worth.





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FEATURE



RCU

EXPANDING FURTHER

TEAM OWNER, COMMENTATOR, MENTOR, INSTRUCTOR, FATHER: RICKY CARMICHAEL HAS NOT SLOWED DOWN SINCE RETIREMENT SEVEN YEARS AGO. HERE HE SPEAKS ABOUT THE NEW PHASE FOR RCU EUROPE...

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by Ray Archer

Ricky Carmichael's rather special 'University' schooling days for motocross are back on European shores this summer and after two popular editions in the UK in 2012 and 2013, RC is now travelling with Jeff Emig, Jeff Stanton and co to Sweden (GP track Uddevalla on July 19th) and Belgium (July 23rd).

The AMA racing legend and staunch supporter of the Motocross of Nations will link up with his MXoN rival Stefan Everts for the Belgian school at Genk. The benefit of both former champions and undisputed kings of American and European realms together on the track at the same time means the late July fixture will be something unmissable; a unique occasion for a great many motocross fans...nevermind the riders anxious to take onboard some of their instruction and wisdom.

Carmichael and Everts, who last shared soil at the 2005 Nations at Ernee in France, will run the first ever Belgian incarnation of the RCU two days after the 2014 Everts and Friend charity race, also at Genk.

From what we hear places are limited and selling out fast.

For more info go to: <http://rcu.hookit.com/>

New territory with two new countries for RCU Europe. Are you keen to see how the kids and riders respond differently compared to your experiences so far in the UK?

That's a great question. Yes, I think it will be fun to see the different reactions and how the riders respond being in new territories this year for our RCUs.

Why two editions in two different places? What is the thinking behind that?

Well, I believe that it was time to move to another area and present opportunities to those who were not able to make to the one in the UK and also keep growing so that people that want to experience the RCU will have that chance. Not only this but the schedule just came together very easily with these opportunities at these locations.

With the Fatcat circuit in the UK you had a specialist (very sandy) but all-weather circuit and it was sunny in 2012 and 2013. Are you hoping that the 'Carmichael Climate' good luck will hold out for a third year?

Haha, yes, for sure we are hoping for great weather. Although we cannot control 'mother nature' we will do our very best to bring what good weather we have in the States over the pond.

In your battles and relationship with Stefan Everts did you ever imagine that you'd be schooling motocross with him one day?

We've had some great races and I have always had a tremendous amount of respect for Stefan. I never thought that someday we would have this opportunity...but that was quite a while ago and things change and evolve, so I'm glad to have this opportunity with him.

Are you aware of the fact that in drawing people like Stefan, Jeff and yourself to one place that you are creating two special kinds of events? One for the fans and another for riders keen to learn...

I'm aware of the talent that we have at our events and that's what makes it so great. I believe that the people coming - as well as ourselves - will have a great experience and

I'm really looking forward to it. That was one of our goals when we originally set out to do the universities; we wanted to create an experience for the riders that they would never forget and make it different from anything they had ever done before.

The language barrier should be minimal in Belgium and Sweden; was this part of the reason these places were chosen?

This has always been a question mark for me in taking the RCUs to countries with different languages. And yes, this is one reason we thought it would be a good idea to have them in Sweden and Belgium along with other justifications to go there as well.

How would you compare students in the U.S. and Europe? Are they more 'awe-struck' in Europe through not having that access to you at races and through the TV?

I definitely think that at times the European riders are more appreciative of us for sure, just for the fact that they have not been exposed to us as much as the American riders have. Some of the Americans see us all the time and that isn't the same with the Europeans. Many have only seen us when we competed at the Motocross of Nations.

Do you still believe in the role and practical repercussions of the RCU? Are people riding better and safer because of what you guys show and tell?

I definitely believe in our program, otherwise I wouldn't be promoting it and would make changes and do the things I believe in. Our goal is to help these riders be better at what they do. Our hope always is that the school - by making them better riders - will also make them safer riders.

Any experience with Belgian beer? From you and Jeff who will end up still standing at the end of the evening?

I have a little experience yes, although the beer is stronger there and my competition has much more practice on me with that type of condition. But I will give it my best shot!!



RCU EUROPE





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FEATURE





OLLY STONE

LIVING IT

**A BRITISH MECHANIC AT THE CALIFORNIA TUNING
BEHEMOTH OF PRO CIRCUIT HELPING A BRITISH
RIDER UNDER THE LIGHTS OF SUPERCROSS...
WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF OLLY STONE**

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by Ray Archer

After a year of being out here and as part of that prestigious Pro Circuit set-up is the excitement level still the same?

I think more so. The first month here I was pinching myself but now I drive to work thinking that I am a respected member of the Pro Circuit team and I'm here to win a championship. I want to put a number one plate on the wall for Mitch. It does still feel like a surreal thing but at the end of the day I have to be professional and go about my job in the best way I can.

I imagine there are plenty of technicians and mechanics that are envious that you made it to where you are now but do you still get some reality checks now and again?

I think I have a reality check every week! No job is easy or how you think it is going to be; I guess most jobs are like that. Most have ups and downs and this one has some super-ups and some super-lows. If you wanted to interview me after Oakland [Wilson had technical hitch that cost him the win] then I would have disappeared. Being here is more than what I always thought it would be and I do not have regrets about all the sacrifices and hard work I did to put me in this position. I did not want to go anywhere else apart from here [Pro Circuit] and for the current time I don't want to move anywhere else. I want to win a championship.

It does seem like an intense lifestyle just through the demands around the AMA series'...

It is completely different to the way it works in Europe. It is a case of 'get in, get the job done, get out'. I've never done as many interviews as when I started working with Dean; it's an indication of the limelight and that works for when things go wrong as well as going right! I've had to adapt to that and not take it too personally. I think the intensity makes things taste so good when you have those great moments but then when you don't you feel pretty bad.

Was it initially tricky to settle in at Pro Circuit? Especially as the only British staffer there...

In the beginning I was the butt of many jokes, just for my accent! Even now I get the jokes, but you earn respect over time. It is like any new team you go to; if you are the new guy then you are vulnerable, you are the mouse. You keep your head down and do your job until you are comfortable. When you feel part of the family then you can give 'it' back. We do have fun and joke around here but the professionalism is another level. When it comes to putting the 'game face' on then there is no messing around and we are here to do one job.

OLLY STONE





Pro Circuit is renowned for being one of the most hard-working teams...but also the most cosmopolitan with French, South Africans, Aussies and Brits as part of the crew...

That's true and the majority of the race team are not natives. I don't know why it is...people travel from far and wide to try and work for this team. Mitch is welcoming...I guess I've travelled a long way and I don't see my family or friends or people I grew up with. I don't have many friends here; all I do is work and there are no distractions. I am here for a reason and I think he respects all of that. He sees how hard we work.

Switching from Justin to Dean, did that mean another level?

Yeah, another level in pressure. Mitch asked me last year if I could handle Dean and I said 'yeah, I think I can'. But there is handling Dean and then there is Dean The Destroyer. The guy is unbelievably hard on his bikes and equipment and I've had some late nights. I've worked more hours with Dean compared with someone like Justin who is easy on the bike. Justin was grateful to be there and was a rookie as well – as I was – so we were both figuring it out in 2013. You have to be on your game to keep up with Dean but coming from Europe the long hours are no surprise. If you go riding at Lommel then afterwards the bike is trashed and you have to be working until 10-11 at night to get it ready for the next day. This is not a 9-5 job anyway, as people might think, but with Dean it is definitely not! I don't mind that though. You do the work and then go to the races to get a result. Last year I was with a rookie and we were both learning. For me it was about the team; the way of life in America was the hardest to adapt to...but with Dean it is about being here to win.

Your thoughts on Dean? That British link must be handy...

Dean and I hung about a bit last year and got on well and had some good banter at the races and away from the races. He is a hard working rider. We have a lot of things in common. He's Scottish at the end of the day and so are his parents, so when I go to his house we have British meals and drink Tetley tea. There is a bit of home there. We talk about the British TV shows and films and there is a general short-cut.

Isn't there a danger as a mechanic – via a working relationship that can go very well – that you end up being attached to the rider rather than the team?

Yes...and I have thought about it. It is a bridge to cross when I get to it. Ever since I was a kid I wanted to work at Pro Circuit Kawasaki and this is only my second year and I don't feel like I have filled my potential at this team but never say never...

So you are still getting the buzz from being part of PC?

Yeah it happened a lot when I first started. You only had to go into a supermarket and people would see the team gear and want to talk about Pro Circuit. Since working for Dean...it is like he's a celebrity. The scene is definitely wider known in this part of the world than anywhere else I have been. When all the team is altogether in our team wear and travel kit in airports then that draws a lot of attention! It is cool.

READY TO GET OUT?

By Steve Matthes

A nice couple of weekends off here in America before the 2014 Lucas Oil Pro Motocross Championships starts. And once that gets underway it's a nine-races-in ten-week stretch before a real break in August. As we all know, the defending champion Ryan Villopoto is out but the news we've been speculating on did come true as Canadian MX1 champion Brett Metcalfe is jumping on RV's bike this summer to try and get himself a ride back down here for 2015 and beyond.

I do have a ton of questions about the upcoming 450MX AMA national series though and some of the bigger ones that I can't figure out are right here...

Wait, wait: I thought RV was in for the nationals, he did say that right?

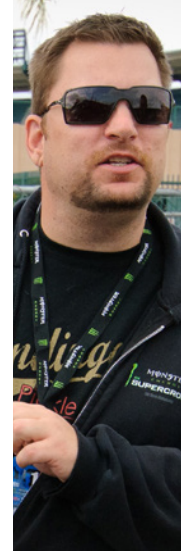
Yes, yes he did. This 'Villopoto has a hurt knee and won't be racing the nationals' story had been out there for a while. I asked Ryan about it over a month ago and while he didn't deny it, he didn't confirm it either. Then after the New York SX he came out and said that he was racing the nationals, which baffled people in his camp. No one could really figure out why he came out and said he was in for the summer. There's no doubt that Villopoto's knee needed repair, he's in Colorado right now getting it fixed and there's no doubt that

he could've raced the nationals with the way the knee is now but there's also no doubting that his issue (no ACL) would've probably reared its head at some point and prevented him from racing the rest of the series. At that point, surgery was going to be needed and it might have cost him a shot at the 2015 supercross title as well as the 2014 motocross series.

So the decision was made to go under the knife and miss one championship instead of two. The smokescreen provided by Villopoto and others was just that, a smokescreen. This decision was made a long time ago and it's strange how Ryan and some of his people handled the news. But no matter what, the series just got more interesting with his departure.

So forgetting Villopoto...how is Brett Metcalfe going to do on his bike?

People in our sport forget quickly and in the case of Metcalfe, when he was last here as a factory Suzuki member in 2013 he was fourth in the points after the opening few rounds when his bike ran out of gas while practicing and he crashed badly. That was it for Metty, he wasn't seen again that summer, never got a decent offer in America and went to Canada to race. But the Aussie did moonlight a bit in America as a privateer at three races and never finished outside the top ten in



any moto. In short, he showed that he was as good as ever and we should expect the now-30 year old to be a top five guy each week and a podium guy here and there. Which is nothing to sneeze at all.

Who could surprise this summer?

Insiders have been talking about Trey Canard and how fast he's been going in testing. Canard's always been quick but has just needed to stay healthy; something he did last summer. Canard works as hard as anyone out there and is happier with his bike outdoors. As a past 250MX champion, Trey knows the deal with being there right until the end. I think he's reached a point where he knows that it's not always smart to grab more throttle and staying upright is a good thing. Another rider that could do some damage this summer is Canard's team-mate Justin Barcia. Bam-Bam did not have a great supercross season (don't let the top five in the standings fool you) and he's stated for the record that he feels like the Honda works better for him outdoors also. And of course, Kenny Roczen will be 'up there' all summer and in contention for wins and podiums but he's admitted that this first full-time 450 season has gotten to him a bit so I wouldn't be surprised to see Canard and Barcia take a little step ahead.

So who's going to win?

The favorite has to be Ryan Dungey no? Dungey's got two 450MX titles and in my opinion is probably stronger outdoors than indoors. The real question and wildcard is James Stewart. Last summer Dungey had Stewart covered the most races pretty easily. So did Stewart improve enough to run with Ryan outside? One would think he has if you go by supercross results. Stewart was a better rider than Dungey pretty much every weekend this year so can the improvement be matched in motocross? That's the million dollar question. Even if Stewart does indeed have Dungey beat in speed in the motos, there's little doubt that Dungey beats Stewart in the consistency department. 24 motos of 30 minutes plus 2 laps and it's hard to see Stewart finishing each and every one of them. That's just what James Stewart does. He amazes, he thrills, he goes fast and sometimes, things go wrong. Dungey, on the other hand, is just the diesel motor of the 450 class. He's very fast, he's in great shape and he's consistently consistent. I'm betting we'll see Ryan Dungey on top of the podium come the end of this series.



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D **FEATURE**

GOING LARGE

**THREE REASONS NOT TO FEEL THE FEAR AND
EMBRACE KTM'S VERSATILE AND IMMENSELY
ENJOYABLE 2014 690 ENDURO R**

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by KTM/Romero

KTM 690 ENDURO R





Excess, for some, is a powerful draw. How much power, enjoyment and exhilaration would you like sir? On the dirt the trend of recent years in fact feels like it has headed the other way. Despite technical advances and the performance of dirt-bikes reaching an astonishing level of competence, the general jist has been about 'reduction'; from debates on 450/MXGP machinery to nostalgia for lithe two-strokes to narrowing of the capacity for the Dakar rally down to 450cc engines on the biggest off-road competitive landscape of them all.

Owning and riding 250cc four-stroke enduro bikes the prospect of throttling KTM's 690 Enduro R feels daunting. 440 cubic centimetres more? Really?!

Although, as with several of their more high profile recent models, KTM have introduced a concept, teased expectations and then actually delivered something that subverts our perceptions. Examples? The 1290 Super Duke was labelled 'The Beast' but has won plaudits for its rideability. The 1190 Adventure was a best-selling multi-tasker that suddenly embraced a ground-breaking MSC electronics safety package. A 350SX-F? Would surely not beat the 450s but has ruled MXGP since 2010.

The 690 Enduro R – from the same LC4 engine concept family as the Super Duke and SMC R (supermoto) – falls into this group.



It should not offer a smooth road ride, yet it does. Shouldn't surprise with another innovative electronic package in the off-road ABS but this is one of its best calling cards. It should not feel as light and compact as a motorcycle half its size but is playfully encouraging.

With one revelation out of the way in the fact that the 690 R was actually a manageable and fantastic toy on the trails...other surprising elements could come forward. Here is our pick...



STOP ME NOW - ABS

OK, perhaps it shouldn't work...but the feeling is unusual and effective. The stopping power on the 690 and the edgy speed you can carry into turns seems less harsh and more progressive. KTM Product Manager Jörg Schüller spoke to us and shed some light on the adoption and development of this potential trademark new feature that first popped up on the Adventure – KTM's most electronically decorated model – last year.

"I think the ABS is something strong to push. We discussed the subject with the Bosch guys and asked 'is a real off-road ABS possible?' KTM is full of talented off road riders and it seemed like most of them said 'come on... no way'. I would say now that 95% of these people are positively surprised about the possibilities with the ABS. The Adventure was the first to have it but this is a real off-road project. Approaching an off-camber on wet grass and then mud and back to grass it creates an 'oooo!' situation on the brakes but we found that the ABS gave good feedback even for more experienced riders."

I'd hardly class myself as an experienced rider. I spend far too much time writing about bikes rather than riding them but the reassurance and possibilities of the ABS, especially from the rear was immediately noticeable. You can still lock the thing of course but the facility provided is another asset.

"It took a lot of testing to get right with the applications of the electronics these days," Schüller says. "It is a big amount of work to get the right deceleration and put it all on the edge. We have to do a step-by-step process and this takes time."

For those looking to use the 690 principally on dirt but then also consider more mundane and day-to-day journeys then the ABS is a selling point and that KTM have drafted it across from their Street machinery into their vast off-road cannon is another sign of their philosophy to always slightly move the goal posts for the market.

"Overall the ABS is quite controllable," adds Schüller. "It is very different. It is a pretty refined system but this is just the start of development. What we will see is more and more possibilities and more capacity for the electronics brain to make it better."



KTM 690 ENDURO R





FEATURE





GROWL FROM THE BOWEL – THAT LC4

Naturally electronics play a role in the engine performance and the vast reserve of potential that the 690 Enduro R offers thanks to ride-by-wire throttle and a motor with a twin plug ignition system. Torque and pull seems to draw on forever and as you'd expect there is more than enough guts to get you in and out of situations while off-road. The clever part of the LC4 adapted for this motorcycle is the way the bike reads your speed and throttle position and makes sure you have the power you need whatever the predicament.

A few times I come across a dry stream bed followed by a steep and rocky uphill. I can descend into the short gully, guide the bike and punch up the climb without a moment's worry about gearing or revs. Again, the 690 is reassuring. The engine response helps in those slower and wobbly moments when you are suddenly reminded of the weight of the bike. On road the motorcycle delivers what you would expect of a 690 and the powerplant that sits neatly inside the Super Duke. Apparently vibration is down, as is fuel consumption (almost 80mpg) and overall engine weight, while service intervals are up to 10,000km.

The knobbly tyres make a full appreciation of the bike on tarmac a little tricky so it is the trail that really gets the blood flowing and I still feel that I have not reached the top of the bike's capabilities in two thirty minute runs through the stony Catalan lanes. "The engine character should be quick similar [to the Super Duke]," Schüller says. "It is a bit different in torque delivery and of course a totally different riding position, frame, longer wheel travel and overall approach."

Overall the 690R is like a soft giant of enduro and those electronics help to hide some riding sins and rustiness. The speed capability provides a decent rush, especially on the hills and straight, open sections of our route. On a tighter and more technical path I suspect it would provide a valuable assist because sometimes you do have to haul the 139kg (dry weight) around. On asphalt it happily chimes along the motorway at 130kmp/h, although for regular use at that speed I'd look at changing the seat for one with a hump!

THE LOOK – THE 690 CHARACTER

Yes it's a hefty off-roader. And it's tall: a serious obstacle for anybody under 5ft10 who will need to find a way to hop-on because at 5,11 I struggled to swing a leg over. As you'd expect from KTM it's a looker: black rims, tubular frame, angular silencer. Onboard it feels slim and compact for all the workings that are going on underneath. Off-road riders might find some other details to pick-up on, but it is worth remembering that KTM have really tried to aim for a blend with the 690 Enduro R. As Schüller understates: "For real off-road riding it might be too much, but it depends on the trail. Wide open places then you can go for it. For tight 'trialy' stuff then it is still good but it is a big bike. From a road perspective it is a nice little bike!"

The appearance lends itself to a hardy dirt-bike but what KTM have moulded both inside and out is essentially a model for 'off-road made easy'. No need to worry about a van or trailer. You can contentedly ride the 690 R out of the city, round the B roads and then start your countryside fun. As Schüller concludes: "This is really one of the few bikes left out there that can be so versatile. You can hit the trails, get on the country road, go through the city. It is easy, lightweight and gives a good journey."



KTM 690 ENDURO R





PUSH THE LIMIT



In the hotly contested AMA Supercross Championship, Ryan Dungey and his KTM 450 SX-F push the limits of what can be achieved with willpower and the right material. The accumulated racing experience and expertise that goes into the factory bike is found in the genes of every KTM 450 SX-F. The state-of-the-art KTM 450 SX-F engine delivers explosive power – the robust, lightweight chassis and top quality suspension components ensure perfect handling in every situation. Your complete package for victory.

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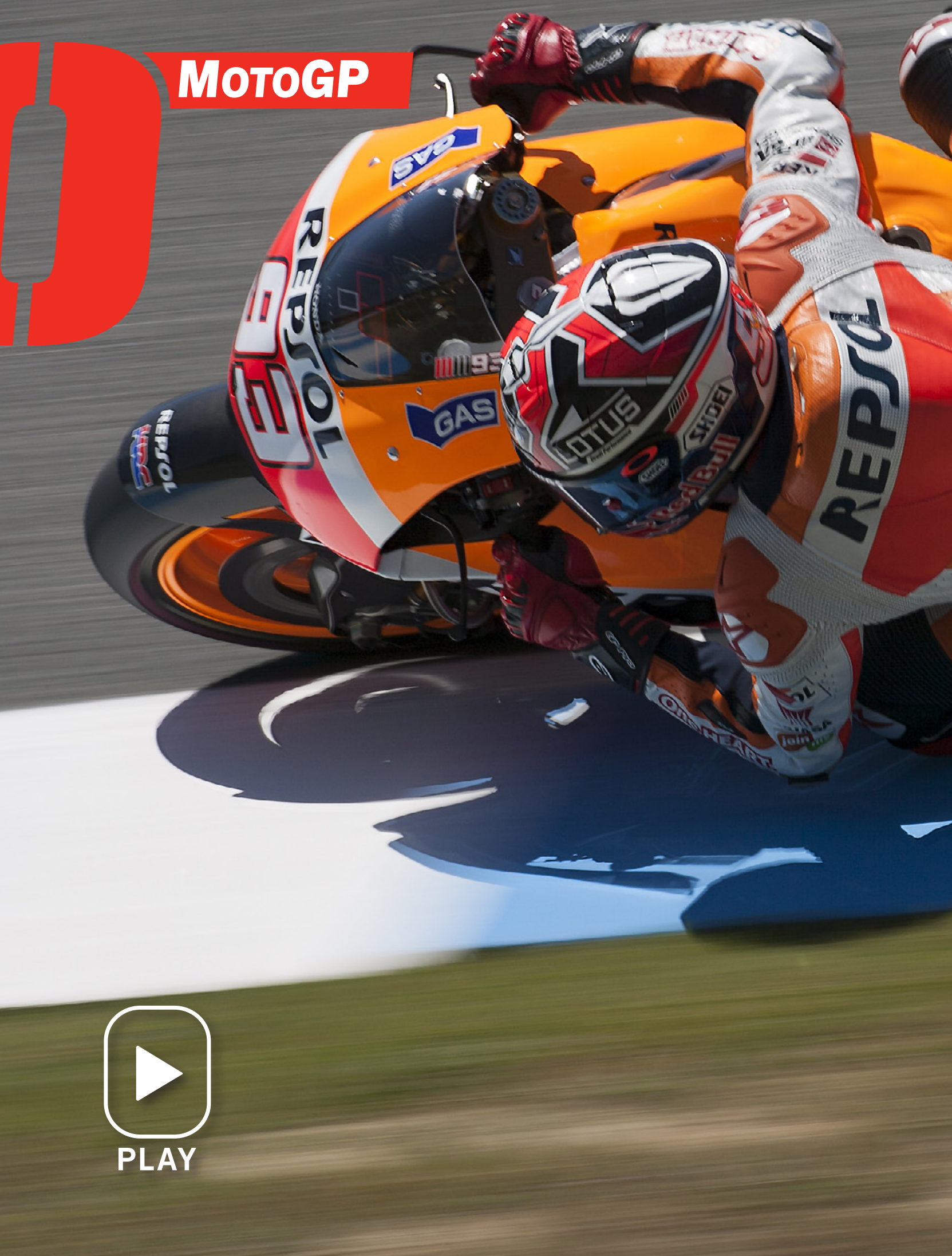


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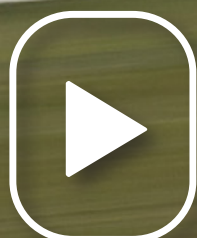
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Please make no attempt to imitate the illustrated riding scenes, always wear protective clothing and observe the applicable provisions of the road traffic regulations!
The illustrated vehicles may vary in selected details from the production models and some illustrations feature optional equipment available at additional cost.

Photos: S. Cudby, H. Mitterhauer



MotoGP



PLAY

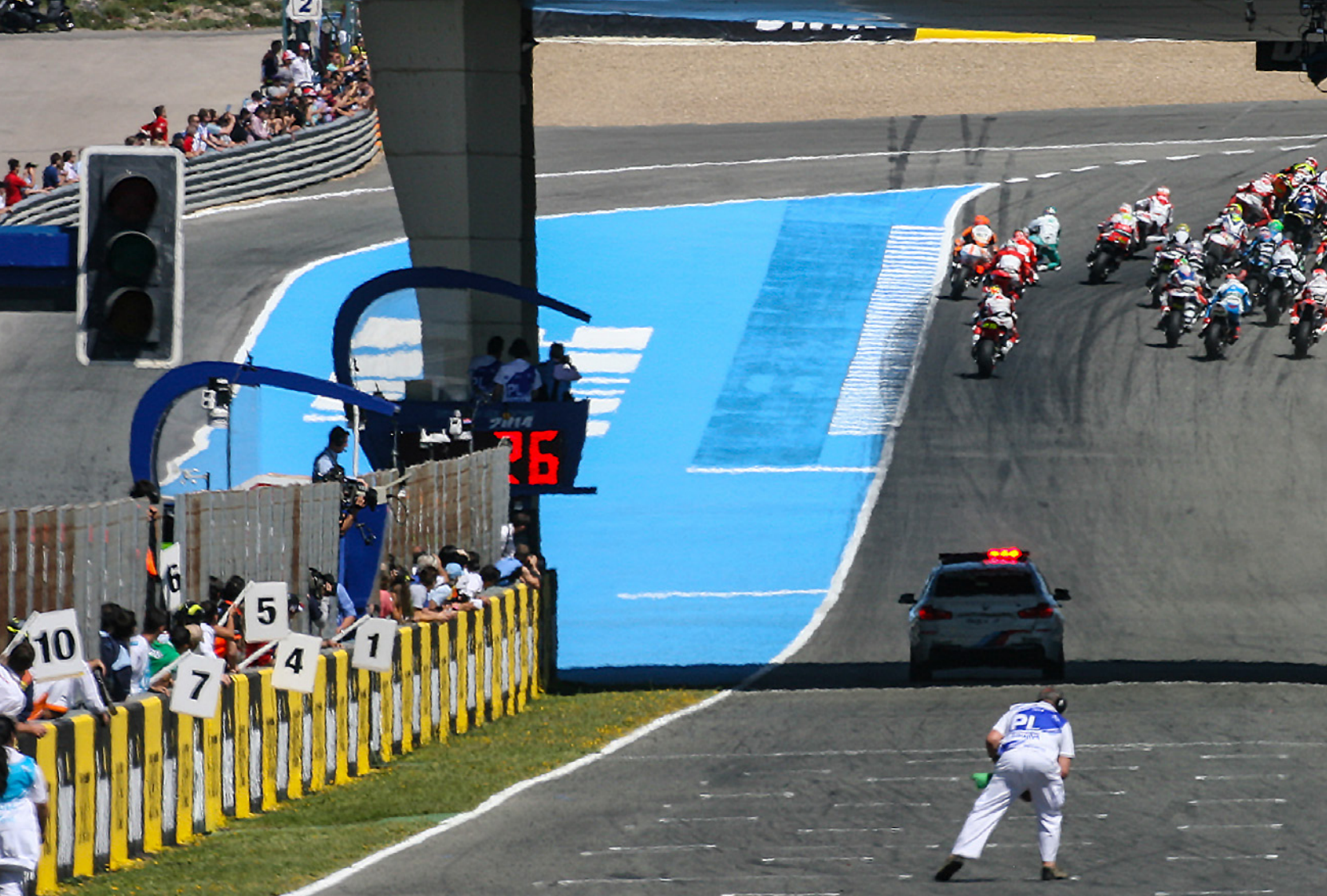


MotoGP JEREZ

...AND COUNTING

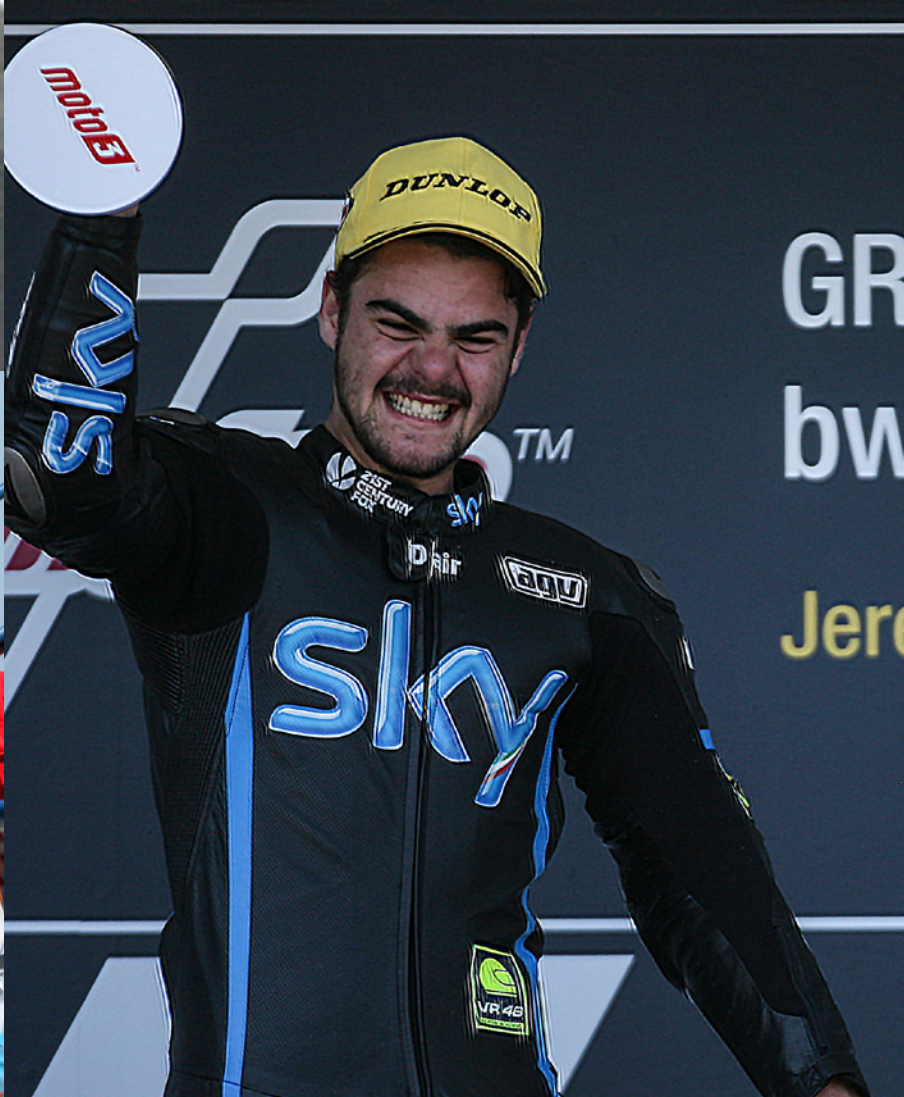
36 WINS NOW FOR MARC MARQUEZ IN 100 GRANDS PRIX AND CRUCIALLY STILL NOT MUCH SIGN OF WEAKNESS IN 2014. HERE ARE SOME OF MARTIN HEATH'S CHOICE PICS FROM JEREZ

Photos Martin Heath www.martinheathphoto.com



Action gets underway at Jerez that saw an attendance increase over 2013. The track has been the home of the Spanish GP since 1987. Mika Kallio takes his first Moto2 win since Brno last year while Romano Fenati goes 2 in 2 in Moto3 to give KTM 50





Loose and unleashed. Van Horebeek is unstoppable in his second MXGP season so far







PLAY









MotoGP JEREZ

DUCATI

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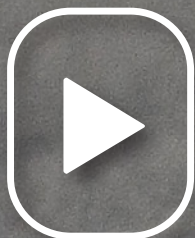
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PLAY



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AT ODDS WITH THE ODDS...

By Matthew Roberts

Let me start this blog by saying that I do not advocate betting and I'm not suggesting you do it. However, from a purely personal point of view I must admit to sharing Homer Simpson's attitude towards the occasional flutter. "It's a little thing daddies do to make football more exciting," he told Lisa in an episode where she quizzed him on the morality of the habit. And let's face it at the moment any little tweak to make MotoGP more exciting has to be a good thing, right?

I started the season thinking that anybody betting against Marc Marquez was even dumber than Homer and I backed the Spaniard in the opening three rounds. As far as I could see his adaptability to all conditions made him a clear favourite in Qatar, he could probably ride to 90% of his performance from 2013 in Texas and still win and there was only one candidate when the series headed to another new track in Argentina. I was making a tidy little profit and even though the odds kept tightening I raised my stake to keep the winnings up. Pretty smart, I thought.

However, at Jerez I was sucked in. The odds on Marquez were tighter than ever and, in my eyes, extremely generous for a Dani Pedrosa (9/2) or Jorge Lorenzo (7/2) win. After all, Pedrosa had finished on the podium in all eight of his MotoGP starts at Jerez, including wins in 2008 and 2013, whilst Lorenzo won in 2010 and 2011 and finished second in 2012 - less than a second behind Casey Stoner. Marquez, by contrast had

never won at Jerez in any class and had only made the finish line on three occasions, even though one of them was just seconds after a memorable move for second place on Lorenzo in the final corner.

Anything like such a close battle with his compatriots this time and Marquez would be forgiven for accepting a podium and consolidating his early championship lead, with many more circuits and circumstances to come that will suit him more. Surely, if there was just one race this season where you might fancy Lorenzo or Pedrosa over Marquez, this had to be the one. As a back-up, I decided an each-way banker on a top two finish for the other two Spaniards would cover any losses should Marquez shock them once again.

Of course, like any bad gambler (there is no other kind), I should have known better. Not only did Marquez blast to his first ever victory at Jerez to provide a terrifying look into the future, his idol Valentino Rossi was inspired to produce an unlikely reminder of glories past with second place and his first podium in four years at the track. I suppose it just goes to show that in motorcycle racing you can only learn so much from statistics. Indeed, as Homer also said: "People can come up with statistics to prove anything. Forty per cent of people know that."

Surely even he wouldn't bet against Marquez for the rest of this season. I know I won't.

SBK

ROUND 3 IMOLA

AUTODROMO DI ENZO AND DINO FERRARI · M

Race 1 winner: Jonathan Rea, Honda

Race 2 winner: Jonathan Rea, Honda



PLAY

REA OF SUNSHINE

**ONE WEEK AFTER IMOLA WAS THE FOCAL POINT FOR F1, SBK
MOVED IN AND JONATHAN REA MOVED ON...TALK ABOUT A
PERFECT WEEKEND**

Photos by Graeme Brown, Kawasaki Racing Team, Milagro, Ducati Corse Press,
suzuki-racing.com, www.worldsbk.com

MAY 11th - Rnd 4 of 13

WORLD SBK IMOLA





WORLD SBK IMOLA

Davies achieves his breakthrough results since joining Ducati and picked a decent venue to do so...



50





WORLD SBK IMOLA

Set-up issues blunted Eugene
Laverty's hopes at Imola...





WORLD SBK IMOLA





WORLD SBK IMOLA

Sykes only just contains Baz on what was a quiet weekend for the Kawasaki crew in Italy



PLAY







SBK CLASSIFICATION & CHAMPIONSHIP

SBK RACE ONE RESULT

Riders		
1	Jonathan Rea, GBR	Honda
2	Chaz Davies, GBR	Ducati
3	Tom Sykes, GBR	Kawasaki
4	Loris Baz, FRA	Kawasaki
5	Sylvain Guintoli, FRA	Aprilia

SBK RACE TWO RESULT

Riders		
1	Jonathan Rea, GBR	Honda
2	Chaz Davies, GBR	Ducati
3	Sylvain Guintoli, FRA	Aprilia
4	Loris Baz, FRA	Kawasaki
5	Tom Sykes, GBR	Kawasaki

SBK CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (4 of 14 rounds)

Riders		
1	Jonathan Rea, GBR	139
2	Tom Sykes, GBR	135
3	Sylvain Guintoli, FRA	123
4	Loris Baz, FRA	119
5	Chaz Davies, GBR	87



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TIME FOR TALKS...

By Graeme Brown

The WSBK circus camped up at the Autodromo di Enzo and Dino Ferrari in Imola at the weekend for Round 4. The season has just started, right? It was only yesterday that we were pushing shiny new bikes onto the start finish straight at Phillip Island for pre-season photoshoots. It is just about a third of the way through the term already but rider and team managers are still talking things down – ‘there’s a long way to go’ and all that.

There is in a sense. The last race tyre won’t be fitted until well into October and here we are at the first weekend in May but some people’s attention at Imola was clearly focused much further in the future.

I always expect to see lots of top brass from the Italian manufacturers at Imola, especially Ducati, whose factory is a quick squirt of the throttle up the A14 in Borgo Panigale. I did however notice some very important Japanese staff at Kawasaki, including the head of new product development - although he was taking a photograph of an electric bicycle at the time - and most of Honda Europe’s Motorcycle management team in attendance. So was it just the piadini and gelati that had attracted them to the race or was there more going on?

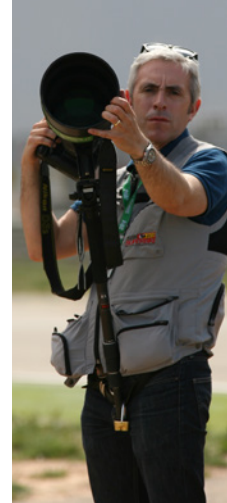
It turns out that most manufacturers sit down at this time of the year and set their programmes and budgets for the following camping. So here I am worrying about when to leave home to drive to Donington in just over a weeks time and the important people in the paddock are discussing whether or not they will actually go racing in 2015.

The other focus on next year was about the technical regulations. The FIM WSBK Technical Director Scott Smart was apparently a popular man with the press pack as they tried to squeeze any snippets of information from him. Seemingly we will get official news before the race at Donington on the rules for 2015. The guys at Pedercini Kawasaki, currently running in the EVO class, were discussing the possibility that there would be no EVO class next year. My understanding was that that was always the case. The plan this year was to use the EVO class as a forerunner to the 2015 regulations with all machines becoming more ‘stock’.

I am sure there were a lot of interesting discussions behind closed doors that we won’t find out about until after the summer. A number of riders have contracts coming up for renewal. In the Honda camp nothing will be discussed in Superbike terms until the GP seats have all been taken. Both Marquez and Pedrosa’s contracts expire this year as does satellite riders Alvaro Bautista and Stefan Bradl so there may be a bit of shuffling to be done at the big H.

One man also ready to renew his contract is Jonathan Rea. Imola saw the Northern Irishman hit the peak of his form so far on a Superbike. With Pole Position, 2 race wins and the fastest lap of the weekend he has certainly put a nice shine on his CV, and with Honda Europe management in the pit box I am sure his prospects for 2015 just got a whole lot brighter.

Anyway I think I will leave early and get to Donington just in time for lunch.



RACING PERFORM

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THOR

GAUTIER PAULIN

.....
MXGP WORLD CHAMPION

6D HELMETS

Justin Bogle (or his crash), Stefan Everts and the Geico Honda team: just three factions of top level motocross racing that have helped 6D helmets push their way into consciousness over the last year but it is also their technology and the very substance of what constitutes a 6D lid that has also been gaining attention.

Since their informative presentation at the 2013 Motocross of Nations in Germany 6D has been on our radar and we even highlighted the alternative approach to head protection the American firm is bringing o the market in one of our previous issues. Here we are happy to highlight their flagship ATR-1 in Crusader graphics. The ATR-1 of course has the innovative Omni Directional Suspension (elastomeric dampners between the linings) and the shell is made of Advanced aerospace carbon fibre, composite fiberglass and Kevlar. You have all the features you would expect from a premium helmet such as large eyeport opening, emergency release cheek pads, engineered venting and a three year warranty.

Check out the website. The explanation behind ODS and more is fascinating.

www.6dhelmets.com









TRIUMPH & BARBOUR

If anybody is in London on the weekend of the 24th/25th - maybe before coming to visit the British MXGP at Matterley Basin a short distance south in Winchester - then pass by Tobacco Dock (in central London, Wapping) to check out the BSMC III gathering; two days of impossible custom cool at The Bike Shed. The exhibition/gallery is climbing in popularity each year and gaining attention for the crossover between the retro styling of motorcycling and some well-known brands. The 2014 edition is sponsored by Triumph and as you may have seen the British manufacturer have linked up with one of OTOR's favourite clothing companies, Barbour, for a sumptuous one-off version of the 900cc Scrambler.

Among the features of the supped-up 70s vibe of the bike are: 'realigned front forks, stylish sawn-off 'Enduro' exhaust and the imaginative use of authentic Barbour wax cotton on the seat. Polished chrome decal on the tank and retro-fitted, high performance shocks finish the look. Other notable enhancements to the bike include mini LED indicators front and rear; Spirit carbon mudguards; motocross-style handlebars; Bates-style headlight and LED brake light; Oury grips and a shortened rear frame. Paintwork was designed by Spirit of the 70s and created by D-Lucks of Brighton.'

The joint project will be shown at The Bike Shed and then also at Triumph Live on July 12th. After that then maybe the race to see who can open their wallet first will begin.

For tickets to BSMC III: <http://thebikeshed.cc/product/bsmc-iii-2014-event-ticket/>

www.triumphmotorcycles.co.uk
www.barbour.com

ALPINESTARS

Some unconventional riding offerings from the Italians here. The Sierra boot is made from gore-tex and might be the ideal light option for some easy trail riding towards the end of spring when a fresh rain shower has left some damp conditions. Perhaps not something you'll want to be thinking about in the summer although it is a rugged choice for the road if some hefty boots are not to fancy in warmer temperatures.

As most people's favourite season draws closer – for motorcyclists certainly – then the Spark jacket is a light, windproof and waterproof option with CE approved shoulder and elbow protectors. There are various zips and straps to control ventilation and a close fit to stop the jacket buffeting around at speed. It should retail for 200 pounds or 220 euros. The boots are 160 pounds or 180 euros.









FOX

Fox were unable to count on MX2 Rockstar Suzuki star Glenn Coldenhoff to present their Limited Edition 360 Given Racewear at the Dutch Grand Prix recently due to the 23 year old's disastrous knee injury. Glenn was swapped for a mannequin for the fetching design that was originally unveiled by Ryan Dungey at the New York Supercross. The purple, blue and red colours pull the overall look quite close to some sort of Spiderman vibe but it seems like the tussle between Fox and Alpinestars continues for some of the coolest off-road riding garments to come on the market.

Alpinestars have come up with some questionable designs of late but their 2015 Techstar package with Jeffrey Herlings was a pleasing turn-up with some black sections around the jersey and pants reinserting class back into their gear. Fox have prodded their design department as well as the Limited Edition clearly shows, although how much of their 2015 line comes close to this remains to be seen. It's all subjective of course and down to personal preference but it appears to be easier than ever to look the part while getting dirty these days.



BACKPAGE

Monster Energy Girls
Ray Archer







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'On-track Off-road' is a free, bi-weekly publication for the screen focused on bringing the latest perspectives on events, blogs and some of the very finest photography from the three worlds of the FIM Motocross World Championship, the AMA Motocross and Supercross series' and MotoGP. 'On-track Off-road' will be published online at www.ontrackoffroad.com every other Tuesday. To receive an email notification that a new issue available with a brief description of each edition's contents simply enter an address in the box provided on the homepage. All email addresses will be kept strictly confidential and only used for purposes connected with OTOR.

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